

## The News-Sheet of The Library Association

News Editors: R. G. Surridge and D. R. Jamieson

November 1960

### NEW PATTERN FOR LONDON LIBRARIES

by L. R. McCOLVIN

THE Report of the Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London will have a profound effect on the development of public library services, directly in the London area, indirectly throughout the country. The Public Library service is, of course, only one of the activities of local government which is affected by the recommendations, and, indeed, it will be affected less than most others. Nevertheless the proposals, if adopted, as they should be, will provide a pattern of local government in which satisfactory library provision will be possible everywhere in the area.

Put into the simplest terms the Royal Commission recommends that local government functions in the Greater London area should be exercised by a number of Greater London Boroughs and by one elected Council for Greater London. The Boroughs should perform "all functions except those which can only be effectively performed over the wider area of Greater London", one of the Borough functions being of course, the provision of public library services.

The proposed Boroughs are 52 in number, including the City of London. The new boroughs are in certain instances the same as existing local authorities (e.g. Islington, Lambeth and Woolwich Metropolitan Boroughs, East Ham, West Ham and Croydon County Boroughs, and Ilford, Romford, Twickenham Municipal Boroughs); others will comprise two, three or four existing local authority areas. The largest (on 1959 figure) will have a population of 249,000, the smallest 81,000. All will be, in the view of the Commission, as well able to exercise the maximum powers as any existing County Borough

throughout the country. Altogether the 52 Boroughs will embrace the area of 95 existing urban authorities including parts of five counties.

So far as libraries are concerned, there are now 68 independent urban library authorities as well as parts of five county library systems in the area which will be served, if and when the recommendations are implemented, by 52 independent library authorities.

I naturally turned to my own Survey scheme of 1942. I would then have had 20 library authorities instead of this 52. But I

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This issue of *Liaison* deals with the recently published report of the Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London. To give an overall consensus of opinion, librarians who represent different kinds of authority and a London Borough Councillor, all of whose responsibilities might be affected with the implementation of the Report, were asked to record their first impressions. All responded to the request within 48 hours.

### DAILY PAPER FOR SCIENCE?

The prognostication of a daily newspaper devoted to scientific and technical matters was among the remarks made to a recent meeting of the Institute of Information Scientists by Professor J. D. Bernal, F.R.S.

Professor Bernal's oft-repeated thesis that the conventional methods of communicating science are fast breaking down was amplified in his talk by comments such as "the most useful documentalist is the wastepaper basket", and "The information scientist's job is to break up the log jam caused by the libraries".

In the House of Commons on November 7th, Sir David Eccles stated that no bill would be introduced this session dealing with the public library service. Further study is necessary and there was inevitable delay until the boundary review had been completed.

don't think the number matters so much as the agreement with the principle that every library authority should be reasonably capable of doing its job. "Our preference" it is stated in the Report "is in favour of making the size of the Boroughs as small as possible, having regard to the following limiting factors:

- (1) that the scale of operations must be big enough to attract first rate people to the service of the Borough, both as councillors and officials;
- (2) that the resources of the Borough must be sufficient to support the full range of Borough services, including both what we have termed compulsory and what we have termed voluntary services;
- (3) that the size and population of the Borough must be large enough to make the administration of each of the various services reasonably efficient."

### To Our Credit

Specific references to libraries are few, but they are to the credit of the service which I know impressed the members particularly because of the way in which voluntary co-operative schemes had removed the disadvantages of multiple service and strengthened the total resources of the metropolis and at the same time led to greater local pride and progress. A tribute is paid to the Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Joint Committee for its share, *inter alia*, in this work. The general verdict is "From what we have seen of the library service in the metropolitan boroughs and elsewhere we are convinced that this is a service which the Boroughs undertake most successfully. We recommend that they should do so and that the excellent arrangements which they have for co-operation and interchange of books should continue".

So much for the libraries. What about the librarians? There is in the Report much that is wise to say about officials and councillors.

As to the former, "It is impossible to carry out the vast range of local government services at the present day without the employment of an army of 'professional' people technically skilled in their respective activities.

### Technical Skill

"The actual interfering with people's lives will be done mainly by the professionals; planning of services involves much work by professionals, contacts between citizens and authorities about personal matters will be largely contacts with professionals, and the more impersonal services (e.g. refuse disposal) will be performed entirely by professionals. So good professionals are indispensable; and an important criterion of size and area is the need to attract good professionals. This in practice means that (1) there must be scope for enough of them, organized by function in proper ranks and grades; (2) there must be the possibility of paying adequate remuneration; (3) there must be enough work to give full scope for the use and development of their professional abilities; (4) the 'hierarchy' must be large enough to offer some scope for advancement or promotion, even if promotion at or near the top is usually achieved by moves from one authority to another; and (5) one must not have more posts of such importance as to require exceptional ability than one may hope to fill from the relatively small number of exceptional people upon whose existence one can safely reckon".

Of the councillors:

"(1) He must know his people, those who have elected him, their needs, desires and fears. He must also remember that he represents

not only those of his constituents who have voted for him but also those who have voted against him. Even where, as so often happens, seats are uncontested, a councillor usually represents some who would have voted against him if they had had the chance.

"(2) He must be prepared to learn enough to participate effectively in policy decisions carrying out 'compulsory' functions and in policy decisions as to the extent to which 'voluntary' functions should be undertaken.

"(3) He must learn how to utilize professional advice in coming to policy decisions without becoming a slave to it.

"(4) He must learn to keep away from interference in the administrative execution of policy, leaving case work to the professionals.

"(5) He must maintain close enough relations with the officials and their work to enable him to form opinions as to their competence; to be satisfied that policy is being faithfully and competently carried out; and to ensure that matters involving policy are brought at the right time before the appropriate committee."

### Cold Comfort

To come nearer home, however. Not unnaturally librarians will ask how the proposals will affect them personally. It may be cold comfort to remind them that "it happened before" when the Metropolitan Boroughs were shaped out of the Vestries. However, on the face of it, apart from the counties concerned 68 existing independent systems will be replaced by 52; and four of the new Boroughs will "inherit" three chief librarians and several will have two (incidentally in at least one case a borough will lose its central library). On the other hand eight of the new Boroughs will be new library authorities, their areas being former parts of counties. Nevertheless the net result will be

the need for sixteen fewer municipal chief librarians and one county librarian! And, of course, there will be similar "redundancies" in other ranks—at least in theory. In practice, however, the work remains to be done and indeed will, given greater efficiency and greater resources, increase and no fewer people and no less competence and expertise will be needed to do it.

Obviously the present status of each individual will be safeguarded and any loss of office compensated but I realize that "present status" and "possible future status" are by no means the same thing. However, let us comfort ourselves with the thought that we shall suffer no more than treasurers and town clerks and, seriously, with the knowledge that there is bound to be a considerable period both before and after the introduction of any new system during which adjustments and changes can be made without hardship, during which men will retire, move to other posts and so on. I venture to prophesy that few members of library staffs will suffer seriously and that in time all will benefit enormously as the status of the library service is improved, as it will be.

One final matter—the effect of the proposals on the county systems. Hertfordshire will not lose so much as the others—some 67,000 out of about 590,000 of population served. Neither will Kent (120,000 out of about 595,000). But Essex and Surrey will lose nearly half their library public—though they will still retain ample to ensure and justify good all round provision. Middlesex will disappear. I can only hope that, when the time comes those responsible for the disposal of book stocks will realize that the basic book collection of a library—as distinct from the duplication necessary for multiple service points—is a balanced, integrated whole that should not be ruthlessly dismembered.

## DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

**A View of the Report by S. J. Butcher (Hampstead Borough Librarian)**

MANY more or less elderly gentlemen probably experienced a variety of emotions on examining the proposals of the Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London and these must have varied from pleasurable excitement to a certain jealous apprehension. First reaction is one of admiration for the broad vision, cogent argument and detailed analysis embodied in the Report.

Subsequent reflection brings the realization of the magnitude of the proposed reforms which directly affect the lives of nearly nine million people and embrace a rateable value equal to one-third of the total for property in England. The creation of an overall Council for Greater London to deal with the metropolitan problems of traffic and planning and the allocation of wider responsibilities to the new Boroughs will probably be accepted with greater readiness than the suggested amalgamations of authorities.

In fairness, it must be stressed that the suggested groupings are provisional and not advanced by the Commission as definite conclusions. It would be foolish not to expect some of the recommendations to be challenged and time itself may make nonsense of some of the groupings. Most local authorities will be against the proposals on the grounds of the disruption of established services and the difficulty of civic cohesion and there is little doubt that ingenious alternatives will be advanced to the Minister before a final regrouping is decided.

### Unrivalled Opportunities

As I see it the Report offers unrivalled opportunities to the library service for development and expansion. The resources of the larger unit will enable authorities to provide substantial book-funds which can be used to acquire stocks of greater variety. Adequate qualified staff at each point of enquiry can be afforded if planned efficient administration is allowed to reduce overlap and duplication. It is true that there is a limited consideration of our function and responsibilities in the text of the Report but the recommendations come nearer to the evidence offered by the Library Association than many hoped.

It brings us a long way from the timid findings of the Roberts Committee and the abortive controversy regarding the minimum size of an efficient library area. The familiar arguments advanced against the over-large unit such as the dangers and delays of an unwieldy administrative machine, loss of local interest, contacts and control can hardly be levelled at areas ranging in population between 100,000 and 250,000. In the new Greater London Area, at least, the anomalous position whereby county and municipal libraries exist as separate entities will end and no-one can deny that this is a good thing. Making every allowance for the difference in origin and administration it is difficult to justify the continuance of the present pattern in London.

It would be disastrous if a further period of uncertainty forces a clamp-down on new buildings and development and the barren years of inactivity and improvisation (due to post-war shortages and a succession of financial crises) be followed by a period of procrastination. There is some hope, however, that tenacity of local interests and the desperate position regarding the inadequacy of present buildings will persuade authorities to continue to plan for the development of their present library services.

# A Memorable Report: A Major Contribution

*By a Member of the Kensington Borough Council*

OCTOBER 19th, 1960, was memorable for local government in greater London; on that day the anxiously awaited report of the Royal Commission was published. The Commissioners had been given an unique opportunity to make a major contribution to the future pattern of local government, and have produced a document of major importance worthy of careful study by elected representatives and local government officers alike.

The results of the inquiry seem to show an overwhelming case for reforms of a far reaching nature. The suggestions for reform put forward with great force, seem to show a profound understanding of the vast problems involved, both human and administrative. The broad principles defined seek to make a modern forward-looking system suitable to the needs of the future, which together with the detail recommendations make a document which will provide food for thought and discussion for months to come; but it is to be hoped not for so long a period that nothing can be done. It is of great interest to note that the evidence presented by the Kensington Council, together with that of other authorities has great similarity to the findings; and indeed acknowledgement of this is made twice in the Report.

The whole report is a challenge to councillors and local government officers, it demands new thought at all levels, on many aspects of local government. Councillors at the Greater London Council level will be called upon to take a far wider view of planning in the future with all that that implies, and those at Greater London Borough level will have much to learn in their new responsibilities. How, then, would the report affect the actual work of a Kensington councillor who would become a member of a greater London Borough? Primarily it would widen the scope and responsibilities, with certain

limitations, to the extent of a councillor of a large County Borough. Secondly, it would require councillors to learn a great deal covering new and unfamiliar ground, for example it is recommended that the whole of the Personal Health services should become Greater London Borough responsibilities, these include welfare in the broadest sense, old people, children and handicapped persons, etc., and the Maternity and Child Welfare services. Of this brief list of services the only one of which Kensington Council has had any direct experience in administration is Maternity and Child Welfare, but such has been the extent of the changes in the Council since 1948, when these services passed to the control of the L.C.C., that there are now only 17 councillors still on the Council and only 5 who served on the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee.

## Exhilarating Future

How far this change of personnel among councillors is the same in other parts it is impossible to tell, without much research, but at any rate for Kensington councillors the vista of the possible future opened by the report is most exhilarating. However, the Kensington Council has had a great tradition for pioneering work in the housing and public health fields and will without doubt welcome the new opportunities implicit in the Report of the Royal Commission.

## Comment from County Librarians

### Larger Units

**R. F. ASHBY, SURREY**, writes:

What one thinks of the Commission's proposals as they affect the Public Library Service is inevitably coloured by how they are likely to extend, reduce, or alter one's present domain. Being a very interested party, I beg leave not to comment on the specific issues which the Report raises. I would, however, like to make some observations on one wider aspect.

British librarianship is a matter, broadly speaking, of small, sometimes very small, library units. Good though many of these are in their way, they would recognize that they have limits, and that these limits arise from small resources in area, bookstock and bookfund. Very few would claim to be making a major contribution to education or technical information which is where the important work of libraries will in the future lie.

The Commission's proposals would create somewhat larger units, mostly between 100 and 200 thousand, in the Greater London area by combining small authorities. This is all to the good. The pooling of resources should result in a proportionate increase in the range of the bookstock, because in many cases one book will be able to do the work of two or three.

But at the other end of the scale there is the number, though they are rather few, of the large library systems with populations of over half a million. Here the effect of local government re-organization—and the Roberts proposals join with the Royal Commission's in this—will be a process of levelling down. Without entering a debatable field and comparing performance, it seems clear that the large library areas provide at



least the chance for something which would otherwise be lost. I refer to the opportunities for planning on an area basis and without the inhibition of town boundaries, that ball and chain of British librarianship; for designing and experimenting with new buildings and learning from one's mistakes; for making the public library a major contribution to Education both in its wider and its narrower aspects; for providing service for industry and commerce and for organizing the special collections of bibliographies, music, plays, and foreign texts, all of which require very large populations to justify them; and even for squeezing out of the bookfund the cost of the really expensive work. How many public libraries, for instance, will be able to buy the British Museum Catalogue?

This trend is going to have consequences for British Librarianship. By reducing the potential of certain libraries it will reduce the potential of the whole. The day of co-ordination of the public library service into a logical organization is put still further off, and the creation of the regional reference libraries, the repositories of periodicals and the area book reserves, which are so much needed, becomes more remote than ever.

Co-operation may help, and the Royal Commission commends it, but I hardly think that the public library service will be a stronger, more effective and more influential service as a net result.

### The Remote Future

Another County Librarian, **MR. S. G. BERRIMAN**, of MIDDLESEX, writes:

The County Librarian of Middlesex certainly cannot be indifferent to the Royal Commission's report but, as one who has lived and worked all his life in Greater London, I agree that its local government is long overdue for

review. But whether the brief proposals upon the public library service are adequate for the needs of this great city is doubtful.

My County Council's building programme in a three-year phase of £540,000; it includes a major building at Harrow which will house the headquarters' services, a comprehensive reference library, a central lending library and a book stack for 250,000 volumes. It would serve not only Harrow but the wider population which transport and shopping facilities bring to this area. These building plans are in step with an increasing book-fund and relations between the County Council and county districts upon library matters are good. As far as I am aware, no member of the Commission visited this or any county service.

### A Tidying-Up Process

The Commission proposes the tidying-up of authorities into 52 boroughs but are 8½ million people to rely solely upon the local efforts of these new authorities? I admire the co-operation among the Metropolitan boroughs who agreed upon the need for a few major reference libraries but has any one borough contributed financially to the reference library of another? Will the Commission's proposals bring about these major reference libraries at key traffic centres of London?

Will the proposed Greater London Council have supplementary powers to establish these and other second-tier facilities as in the case of other public services? Will London gain some comprehensive libraries in foreign languages, music, commerce, technology, etc., all with their specialist staff, or must it be content with 52 separate services all dependent upon local councils who will be pre-occupied with this great shake-up of London's local government?

If these questions become an-

swered as impartial professional opinion would wish, our foreign visitors would no longer wonder why London lacks the libraries we associate with progressive cities in the United States, and I would welcome the overall improvement which would come to the library service of London.

### No Justification

But, if the proposed Greater London Council is not to assume responsibility for major libraries and specialist staff beyond the resources of individual boroughs (less than a third of which will exceed 200,000 in population), the Middlesex staff see no justification for the breaking-up of a system expanding into one of well-stocked branches supported by specialist services and staff.

### An Unwelcome Report

A County Borough Librarian, **T. E. CALLANDER**, of CROYDON, writes:

The Report of the Royal Commission is not, I think, one which will be welcomed by London librarians, who can expect little advantage if its recommendations become law. It is difficult to see how the amputation of north Surrey will help the admirable Surrey County Libraries; compulsory amalgamation of large, active and efficient metropolitan borough services seems pointless; and the reduction in status of the three county boroughs of Greater London will add nothing to the effectiveness of their libraries. The whole Report seems to me to be concerned with administrative tidiness, on paper rather than in practice. Its practical benefits do not seem likely to go beyond some long term improvement in traffic handling and the reduction of the Socialist citadel of County Hall. It is this latter project which will secure adoption of the Royal Commission's suggestions.

# ★ — COUNCIL TOPICS — ★

The L.A. is co-operating with the Fact-Finding Committee of *Nalgo* which asks that all professional societies forward information on salaries, recruitment, retention and wastage of their professional members. This will enable *Nalgo* to submit further evidence in support of the demand for increased salaries for the specialist classes. This information is to be sought from Chief Librarians if not already available from Headquarters.

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## New L.A. Publications

Special Subject List No. 33 has been published. The subject is *New Verse in the 30's* and is compiled by B. C. Bloomfield the Librarian, College of S. Mark and S. John. Price 3s. 6d.

*Books for Young People*; Eleven to Thirteen Plus, Annotated and Classified, compiled by the North Midland Branch of the L.A., has just been published in a completely revised third edition. Price 16s., post 6d. (To members 12s., post 6d.)

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The first issue of *General Post*, an occasional publication of publicity ideas, has been sent to all chief librarians. Any colleagues with reports of successful activities on public relations ideas are asked to send them to Mr. Higgins, c/o Chaucer House.

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The Publications Committee recommended, and the Council agreed, to increase the Prize for the L.A.'s Annual Essay Competition from £10 to £25 in future.

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Mr. M. Higgins has been appointed as Public Relations Adviser for a further period of one year.

## Penguins and Hard-backs

Penguin Books have announced a new condition to be imposed upon the sale of all their books, forbidding them to be "lent, re-bound, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition or in any unauthorized cover by way of trade".

The L.A. is taking Counsel's opinion on the effect of this upon libraries and the matter will be before the Council at its meeting this month.

The Council will also discuss a Report prepared by its Secretary dealing with all aspects of the Public Lending Rights Bill.

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A half of the current year's L.A. thousand pounds Research Grant has been awarded to the Reference, Special and Information section for compiling a guide to current British periodicals.

The Section urged that there is a strong need for "a list which shall include information about all British periodicals likely to be of value to librarians and their readers"; a list which did not pretend to "recommend or evaluate, but merely provide the information necessary for evaluation". Such information as bibliographical history and changes of title, inclusion in union lists, etc., would be omitted as unnecessary for selection purposes, while guidance on the subject or subjects covered, the type of reader for whom the journal is intended, and on the level of treatment of the subject matter, the Section considers should feature prominently in the description of each title.

It has been estimated that the guide would cover about 2,000 titles, providing not less than six months' work for a full-time editor, and it is intended to use the £500 grant to meet these expenses. No one has yet been named as editor.

## L.A. Council Tribute

No reporting of the October meeting of the L.A. Council would be correct without the expression of the tributes made to **Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers**, whose death was reported earlier, by many of his old colleagues and associates at Council. Mr. J. D. Stewart spoke of the stirring times of the early part of the century, of open access and of classification and of how Berwick Sayers was one of a small group in the thick of the acrimonious and bitter battles then fought. Of how he put new life into the Library Assistants' Association and of the many-sided interests which he rigorously pursued throughout his life.

The Council rose in traditional silence, to salute, in Mr. Cashmore's words, "a very big man and a great gentleman". In this issue of the *Record* appear two appreciations of the work of W. C. Berwick Sayers.

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There is no truth in the suggestion made by Mr. W. Tynemouth (Newcastle) that under the new syllabus the proposed qualification for Scottish chartered Librarians is to be A.L.McA.

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The number of L.A. Council meetings is to be reduced from five to four in 1961. The dates are scheduled for 25th-27th January, 5th-7th April, 5th-7th July and 18th-20th October.

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## Wanted—Tender Librarians

"Herts. County Council is about to replace their mobile van libraries operating in Welwyn Garden City and district with a tender library."—(*Welwyn Times*, 16th September.)

## DEVELOPMENTS IN MANCHESTER

The four year plan for the expansion, re-organization, re-equipping and re-furnishing of the Manchester Central Library departments under the enormous pressure which is now put upon them took a further step forward with the opening in September 1960 of the re-organized Henry Watson Music Library and the Arts Library.

The Henry Watson Music Library has been re-furnished and streamlined and the issue of multiple copies of musical works from the largest public music library in the country now takes place from a service point on the ground floor. This separation has enabled the Music Library to re-plan its public service and has allowed it to provide more reference seating for students.

The Arts Library is situated in the same block as the Henry Watson Music Library and both are approached by the main passenger lift from the Shakespeare Hall. Both departments are based on the principle of subject specialization and are open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday to Saturday, for both lending and reference purposes. It can now accommodate one hundred and twelve reference readers with a further twenty-six seats for browsing. Two special tables are available for use with abnormally large books and for artists to work at.

### *Desk Fax*

More than five thousand volumes on art are now available on the open shelves in the Arts Library as well as more than eighteen hundred lending volumes. Communication with a further twelve thousand reference books in Stack as well as a three thousand lending reserve, is by means of Desk Fax communication. This machine copies the reader's slip on the second floor and reproduces it in Stack where it is used as a book replacement slip.

The provision of this department has increased the reference seating accommodation to almost nine hundred. The pressure is still heavy however and the next step in the re-organization, the provision of a subject specialization department on the fourth

floor, which will take the available seating accommodation well into four figures, is eagerly awaited.

### *Twin Caravan Unit*

Also in September 1960 a branch library housed in a twin unit caravan was opened on a site in Northenden. This project was neither an alternative to a permanent branch library or a new form of mobile library, nor yet a compromise between the two. It was a special expedient to meet a special emergency.

The foreclosing of the lease of a temporary branch library in house premises created a need for an alternative temporary library. The long term provision was already being met because there existed in the area a first-class site, but the building to be erected on that site falls in the Council's £900,000 branch library building programme and is scheduled, in its turn, for 1964-5. The ingredients of the problem then were a demand for a service and the existence of a site. The building to be provided had to be comparatively inexpensive, erected swiftly, and capable of dismantling when the permanent building was due. The answer was a forty foot caravan specially constructed by Pilot Caravans of Oakengate, Shropshire.

The caravan stands on the garden which has been specially created round it. The unit is forty feet long and is eight feet

### **N.J.C.; No decision**

There is still no decision to report from the National Joint Council in respect of the continually postponed salary award for public librarians. In the light of the general award of 21st September the L.A. requested *Nalgo* to reconsider the claim for posts required to be occupied by Chartered Librarians to A.P.T. II-III, or alternatively, to a special scale commencing at £815 rising to a maximum of £1,075. *Nalgo* has also been asked to consider having the award back-dated in view of the long delay in its negotiations.

wide; the counter is at an end with the entrance and exit doors facing across the caravan. Around four thousand volumes stand on adjustable shelving on both sides of the caravan walls and lighting is by sixteen strip lights in the ceiling. An emergency door at the far end serves also, because of its "horse box" construction, as extra ventilation in the summer. Heating is provided by two 2 kilowatt fan blown electric heaters, while heating behind the counter is provided by under-carpet heating and a free standing convector. The only windows are those behind the counter; otherwise the shelving is unbroken right round the caravan.

In such projects the disadvantage is normally the unsatisfactory staff conditions. To meet this objection a second caravan was purchased—this time much smaller; in fact a standard four-berth family caravan which has been converted so that it provides a flush toilet to main drainage, an electric cooker, a water supply with an electric water heater. This provides a staff room-cum-work room which is adequately heated and lighted.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Teenagers form only a small proportion of borrowers at **Erith** (Kent), says the borough librarian. "There seems to be a break in membership between the eleven-plus and the mid-twenties", he writes in his annual report. "A reason for this may be the increasing strength of school libraries. For many older children a library becomes closely associated with the school and when the break comes books, libraries and schools are grouped together as evils of the past."

### The Langley Museum

Notes on the collection of tiles at the address known as "The Tile Centre" which are "ancient, curious or otherwise interesting" have been contributed by Mr. C. G. Dobson who is recognized in this country as being one of the leading authorities on roof tiling and slating.

Readers who are interested in this recent publication *Historical Notes on The Langley Museum* may obtain free copies from Langley London Ltd., 163 Borough High St., London, S.E.1.

Middlesex County Libraries are embarked upon the next phase of their building programme which provides a three-year plan for eleven branch libraries, three of which are now being erected, and a new county library headquarters at a total estimated cost of over £500,000.

The British Council opened a new library, a branch of the Council library at Bombay, in Poona on Wednesday, 28th September.

This makes the sixth Council library in India—the others are at Calcutta, Bangalore, Madras, Delhi and Bombay—and it is now planned to open a seventh at Lucknow.

The new library consists of 5,000 volumes and 70 periodicals.

After 28 years on the staff of Eastbourne public libraries, **Mr. A. Robinson**, chief assistant at the central library, has left to enter the Church of England. He is going to Rochester Theological College to study for ordination and hopes to serve in the Diocese of Southwark.

Keeping the children's library open all day as an experiment during the recent school summer holidays, proved a success at **Neath** (Glam.). Over a thousand books were issued during periods when the children's departments would ordinarily have been closed. The council have decided on further all-day opening during school holidays, taking on a few extra temporary staff for the period.

A George Orwell Archive, consisting of manuscripts, diaries, letters and other literary material, has been established in the library of **University College, London**, and a grant of £2,500 was been made by the Nuffield Foundation to set up the archive and to appoint a temporary research Fellow who would extend the collection by making contact with Orwell's friends and take recordings or notes of what they still remembered about the author.

An *International Bibliography of Police Literature* is to be compiled by a committee of the International Police Association, for publication in 1961. The bibliography's eight sections will include police training, organization and administration; investigation and laboratory work; and traffic and accident branches.

The Second W. H. Smith Annual Literary Award of £1,000 was made on 25th October to Laurie Lee for his autobiography *Cider with Rosie*.

## MAIGRET ON TV

A new series of plays featuring Georges Simenon's Inspector Maigret, which will undoubtedly have their effect on our lending libraries, are being produced on B.B.C. TV Yet to come are:

"The Revolver", from *Maigret's Revolver*, adapted by Roger Burford, 21st November; "The Old Lady", from *Maigret and the Old Lady*, adapted by Margot Bennett, 28th November; "Liberty Bar", from *Liberty Bar*, adapted by Margot Bennett, 5th December; "A Man of Quality", from *Death of Monsieur Gallet*, adapted by Giles Cooper, 12th December; "My Friend the Inspector", from *My Friend Maigret*, adapted by Margot Bennett, 19th December; "The Mistake", from *Maigret's Mistake*, adapted by Roger Burford, 26th December; "Summer Holiday", from *Maigret on Holiday*, adapted by Margot Bennett, 2nd January; "The Experts", from *Maigret Lognon et les Gangsters*, adapted by Giles Cooper, 9th January; "The Cactus", from *Maigret en Meuble*, adapted by Roger Burford, 16th January; "A Children's Party", from *The Crime of Inspector Maigret*, adapted by Giles Cooper, 23rd January. (Adaptations are direct from the original French.)

### Luton on Film

Luton is to make a film of its library service. A grant of £150 has been made for the project which is intended to result in a movie that runs for three-quarters of an hour. Tape recordings will provide the sound track.

### National Lending Library

The site of the N.L.L. is to be at Boston Spa, Yorkshire, not, as inadvertently stated last month, Boston in Lincolnshire.



